

A Park for People and Pets
Council President Scott Peters, First District
For the Corridor News

When I was first elected in 2000, one of my top priorities was to site and build a skate park for Rancho Peñasquitos teenagers. Finding a location for this park had vexed the community for five years because of opposition from neighbors near some of the proposed sites about traffic, noise and lights. My office convinced CalTrans to transfer some of its surplus property to the City, which was near major roads with fewer potential neighborhood impacts. The community's Park and Recreation Council considered and overwhelmingly approved the site. We then worked with the community on design and funding, and the Peñasquitos skate park opened early last year.

Now the community is interested in an off-leash dog park, and we are beginning the same community review process on siting, design and funding.

San Diego's off-leash dog parks are some of the city's most popular public places. Dogs are free to run, chase Frisbees and play with their fellow mutts, and dog owners have a place to socialize and let their pets roam safely. Dog parks are especially beneficial for owners who don't have a backyard or work long hours and need a place to let their dog burn off some energy.

The city has twelve off-leash dog parks, including three in District One, in University City, Torrey Hills and Carmel Valley. They've been a great success and wildly popular with dogs and their owners in those communities.

Last year, dog owners in Peñasquitos proposed an off-leash park for their neighborhood. I asked the Peñasquitos Park and Recreation Council to conduct a search for the best location for such a park. After extensive review, the council proposed Peñasquitos Town Centre Linear Park on Salmon River Road.

Now it's your turn to participate in the discussion. The Park & Rec Council will hold a public meeting on Thursday, June 22 at 7:30pm at Canyonside Recreation Center to solicit community input on the idea of reserving one half-acre of the existing lawn at Linear Park for an off-leash dog area. The recommendation before the Rec Council is that the remaining one acre of grassy area would remain, as well as the benches, landscaping and picnic area. The city would construct fencing along the perimeter of the dog run and adjust the irrigation to keep the grass in that area healthy.

If Linear Park is officially approved by the Park and Rec Council, the proposal will advance to the Planning Commission and ultimately to the full City Council. I am happy to back a site that has strong community support.

Speaking of parks, my proposal to ban smoking at city parks and beaches was passed unanimously by the City Council Natural Resources and Culture Committee and will advance to the full City Council this month. If approved, it would go into effect by July.

I'm confident that this ordinance would help address the litter and fire risks posed by discarded cigarettes.